

OPEN LETTER

To: Members of the Scottish Parliament, The Scottish Government, COSLA, Scotland's Community Planning Partnerships, and VCSE

A Shared Framework for Measuring Community Wealth: Building an Open Infrastructure to Measure Scotland's Social Value Delivery

Date: November 2025

As the Community Wealth Building (Scotland) Bill progresses, Scotland has an opportunity to lead internationally in developing open, shared frameworks for measuring community wealth and social value. These frameworks should be free to access, co-owned across sectors, and aligned with national policies. This letter calls on the Scottish Government, Parliament, COSLA, councils, and the third sector to commit to developing shared, open measurement frameworks rather than building separate and incompatible systems.

The Challenge and Opportunity

Scotland already leads in social value measurement, yet current variation in tracking community benefits risks creating duplication. Two-thirds of local authorities are developing Community Wealth Building action plans. Without coordination, Scotland could end up with 32 separate systems using different methodologies, limiting shared progress. Third sector organisations face multiple reporting frameworks and funders' bespoke requirements, turning impact reporting into a compliance exercise. A shared measurement framework would simplify reporting, recognise the inherent value of purpose-driven organisations, and enable collaboration.

An Emerging Foundation: The Social Value Library

Work is underway to create a shared foundation through the emerging Social Value Library. Led by the Social Value Engine, this initiative curates and aligns proxy values and indicators relevant to Scotland. Drawing on over 600 existing measures, it sources open proxies where gaps exist. The Library demonstrates how open data standards can be created and maintained collaboratively as a public good: a shared building block towards a fully open, co-governed framework.

Principles for Open Infrastructure

- Free and open access to proxy definitions and methodologies
- Alignment with national frameworks
- Shared governance across public, private, and third sectors
- Interoperability between systems
- Transparent data sharing and ethical data use

Recommendations

1. **Adopt a Shared, Open Framework:** Include within the Bill's implementation framework commitment to open, co-owned measurement standards freely available to all sectors.
2. **Build on Proven Foundations:** Use the Social Value Library and the Improvement Service's mapping work as the starting point for shared standards.
3. **Champion Active Data Sharing:** Encourage transparent sharing of proxy definitions, methodologies, and outcomes data to support collective learning.

4. **Ensure Third Sector Centrality:** Place third sector organisations at the heart of framework design and governance to ensure fairness and inclusivity.
5. **Support Interoperability:** Allow councils flexibility in their local approach while maintaining comparability through shared proxies.
6. **Prioritise Adoption Support:** Provide resources and guidance to help organisations adopt shared frameworks rather than creating multiple bespoke systems.

A Call for Parliamentary Support

We call on Members of the Scottish Parliament to champion shared, open measurement frameworks within the implementation of the Community Wealth Building Bill. Parliamentary scrutiny should focus on preventing duplication, ensuring comparability across Scotland's 32 councils. MSPs can strengthen this vision by encouraging collaboration, supporting purpose-driven organisations, and ensuring transparency in how community wealth is measured and reported.

The Path Forward

Scotland has the building blocks needed to create a shared, open framework for measuring community wealth and social value. By aligning efforts such as the Social Value Library, the Improvement Service's mapping, and the Scottish Government's use of shared proxies, Scotland can establish a model that is transparent, equitable, and rooted in collective learning. Every new bespoke system represents a missed opportunity for collaboration. A shared, open framework will ensure that all sectors work from a common evidence base and continue learning together about what truly builds community wealth.

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SUPPORT THIS CALL TO ACTION

Scotland's community wealth community is stronger together. If your organisation supports building shared, open measurement frameworks rather than separate systems, co-sign this letter at <https://shorturl.at/uAnMn>.